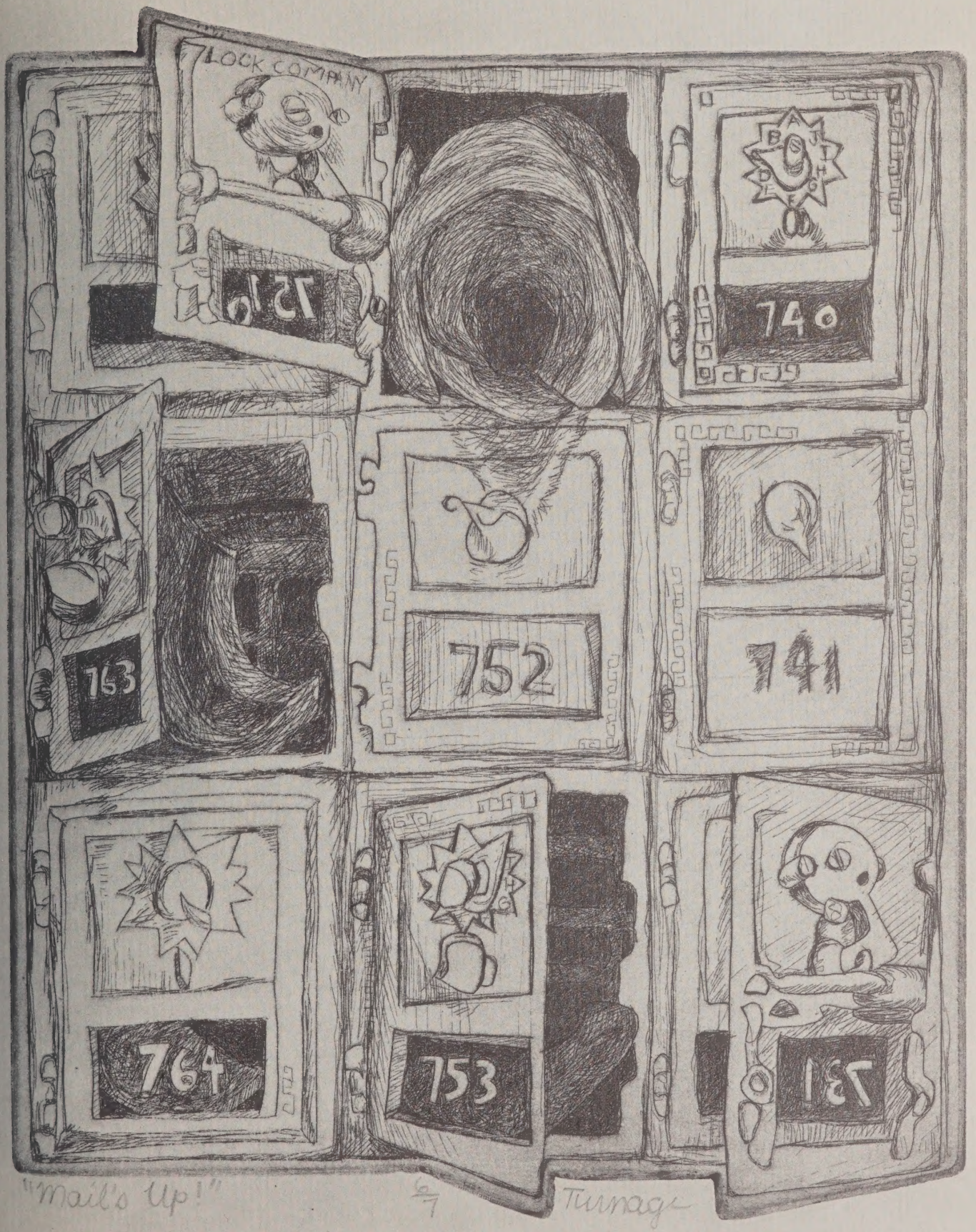

"Mail's Up!" 6/7 Turnage

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IT'S A DOG'S WORLD

The world is much like a dog
It wanders aimlessly through time and space
  the sun its master
Its tree-like hairs
  planted firmly in the skin

And the great dog itches
  for we are the world's fleas.

Colleen Turnage

JAZZ TROMBONE

in and out
the notes glide
up and down
around
keeping pace
with the drums
beating
in the background
always keeping pace
in and out
up and down
keeping pace
the rhythm varies
faster
faster until
until
until
the final note

M'Lou Greene

pardon me,
while i glide
softly between worlds
discovering the life that flows down mountain sides
finding home,
at last, in green seas
these are my veins, in a love, ice blue
becoming warm
for i am these, mountain and sea
worlds alone
awake and alive
and here i will rest
in the newly turned earth of my flesh
i close my eyes and see the sky

Ann Phillips

All alone.
The wind blows gently stirring the trees as it journeys onward.
The air is refreshing and so, so crisp.
Only sounds stir of insects singing and grasses breaking beneath the footsteps of small creatures.
Water tripping over smooth stones in a nearby stream flows serenely.
And oh, the sky . . .
The sky is indeed majestic.
Stars appear as great lights above me and the heavens glow radiantly.
I can gaze forever into their soft beams of light.
My body feels warmth and beauty in this mystic quietness.
My ears are as eyes looking into the soul of nature this night.
The earth is close . . . so close . . .
It has become my friend.
A friend who listens to my thoughts, my songs,
I can embrace it without fear.
It speaks to me with an understanding that brings solitude . . .
A day when I can find myself listening to the sweet songs of the earth,
is a day that brings me a touch of peace.

Becky Rankin

COLLEEN

Where is that little flower?
I dropped it on the lawn
  and someone stepped on it
With tears of sorrow
    Weep now
      But laugh
        once more
For a beau has brought you a new flower.
Smile again.

Joan Oviatt

the night was cold and a rainy
mist fell from the black sky
causing the gothic buildings to look ancient and
sacred
    the campus was silent—for it was getting late
      the patting sounds of our footsteps
      on the wet brick make only a
      slight noise within the quietness
      of the night
bundled up in scarves, hats, gloves, and coats
we must have appeared as two mommies
wandering around in a world of misty
fantasy
      But it didn't matter then—
      because having your arm around me
      and your soul near to mine was all
      that mattered
. . . kissing my wet face and not speaking
. . . reaching out to me through your eyes because
verbalization was something you had not yet
perfected
    I caught the message in your eyes
      I saw the fear
      . . . the fear of hurt and vulnerability which
      comes with love
you almost reached me and we almost touched
but your fear drew you back
    and your image has become vague—
like gothic buildings seen through the mist on cold
winter nights.

Polly Smith

ILLUSIONS

Yesterday
I chased a rainbow
to find
the magical
pot of gold.
I ran through red
over blue
and bypassed green.
Exhausted,
I could see
no end.
I turned around
and slid down
on voilet
confident
my rainbow
would be there
tomorrow.

Today
I am sad
for the sky
is empty.

Tomorrow
I'll pray
for rain
to chase
another rainbow.

Marianna Long

M. greene
Jan '74

Lord;
some favors here i ask of you:
please do me a kindness
by making me a kindness
for those who have
never seen it before;
please show me
your loving by making me
loving to all who have never
done it before.
please show me your patience
in teaching me patience
with those who have never had it before;
but most of all, lord
i here ask this of you:
please teach me life's giving
by
making me giving
to those who, once they receive,
will know hunger no more.
if you are willing,
then, Lord, i am willing
to make all these presents
beneficial to all.
through
him
i pray
amen.

Alvin Johnson

PLAY HOUSES

The engineer waved at me from his window as the Carolina & Northwestern train passed my grandmother's house on Broad Street. When my mother was a little girl, she used to put a penny on those same railroad tracks; and after a train ran over it, she had a good luck charm.

I was spending the summer at my grandmother's. Big Mama lived in a big, brick house with a porch all across the front and a pearl doorbell at the front door. There was a long hall down the middle of the house. We hardly ever used the parlor on one side of the hall, where the green velvet furniture was. Big Mama's bedroom, which was also her living room, was on the other side of the hall. That's where we listened to Lum & Abner on the radio. We laughed about the Jot 'Em Down Store, because my grandfather had had a grocery store before he died.

At the end of the long hall was a lavatory, and they kept a three-sided wooden screen around it for privacy. Part of the screen was canvas with hand-painted cranes on it. You could wash your hands behind it without anybody seeing you. Just behind the hall was a screened-in back porch. We used to toss the water left in our glasses out the screen and watch it fill up the holes in the wire.

Off the back porch was the coldest bathroom you ever saw. I didn't like to get my hair washed because I got soap in my eyes; but my aunt gave me professional shampoos in that bathroom. She put a chair up backwards to the lavatory, and I sat down and put my head back in to the lavatory—just like women in beauty shops. My aunt even put cotton in my ears to keep them from getting stopped up.

There was a big back yard with a dirt floor, not grass. They had a black iron pot that they built a fire under to heat water in and then washed clothes in it with strong-smelling soap and a washboard like one I had for my doll. In the back yard was a building they called the "cement room," where Big Mama kept her canned goods. My favorites were soup mixture and peach pickles. Sometimes a jar would explode all over the wall.

My uncle had one of the first automobiles in town, and he had his own gasoline tank in the back yard. Behind a fence back there was what they called the "lower lot" with a row of wooden houses where colored people lived. They paid my uncle rent every week, and sometimes I went with him to collect it. Around their houses was a vegetable garden with big sunflowers and hollyhocks growing up the fence.

But the front yard is where I usually played. It had a moon-shaped driveway with lots of big trees that had trunks white-washed higher than my head. I liked the big roots of the trees and thought they made fine play houses. Some of the roots were covered with moss, and the space between them was filled with bluets. Some of the spaces between the roots were plain, brown dirt like Big Mama's back yard; and some of them looked like they were in the mountains. The ones with pebbles I used for driveways for little cars. There were dandelions growing and ants running all around. Doodle bugs made their own doors and windows.

I used a little pasteboard tray that caramels came in as a canoe in a puddle of rainwater and pretended that was a lake in the coves of the roots. I decorated the canoe with clover. My doll kept me company in a rubber tire swing which Uncle Clyde had hung from a tree limb.

Sometimes Uncle Clyde took us after supper to a lake where we fed our bread scraps to the fish. It was fun to watch them jumping out of the water to catch the food. On the way to the lake, Uncle Clyde held my little brother on his lap and tried to get him to say "moo" to the cows we passed.

Other times Big Mama would make seafoam candy for us. She was the best cook! She had a big, black stove that burned wood; and she had a little one just like it that she let me cook on in the

yard when I visited her. It had round holes on top covered with lids. There was a special handle to take the lids off with when you needed to poke up the fire.

The only way I could get Doris Peoples to play with me was to let her help me cook a meal on the little stove. Doris was older than I was, but she thought it was the nicest stove in the world. We cooked potatoes and cocoa and string beans; and we watched Big Mama catch a chicken in the back yard and twirl it around by its neck until it died.

I wanted to learn to make seafoam candy like Big Mama's on the stove and chess tarts like the ones Mrs. Freeman made next door. I moved the stove up close to my play house roots the summer my father left home.

Rebecca Schenck

ANTHEM FOR MY BUTTERFLY'S SPRING

i give myself to you
in the words
that i have written;

humbly i
ask that you

accept this
gift;

for it (and love)
are all i
have to give.

they are for you only,
as part of me
is also.

and i ask that, if they please you much,
i may soon do the same.

as long as the words i speak
and write

are about you, butterfly,
i shall be yours

until the time when
either you or i can give no more.

in short i say then, butterfly—

i care for you, i do love you;

i cherish you,
and i pray that, in your heart, there are also words of love
for me.

Alvin Johnson

Reach out, my friend—
Discover all that exists and make challenges so that you'll
experience the new
form your values for they are your backbone that lets you stand upright,
have faith and believe in others even though at times you may doubt the
world,
you must be a giver and a taker, so do so with love and gratitude,
you must be strong when despair comes your way . . .
Look onward, my friend—
There is so much awaiting. Hear me with attentive ears.
Your happiness is what you learn to know best
so grow in it.
Always, hands are there to clasp yours.

Becky Rankin

Consenting adults
alone in their thoughts
wary of the looks that pass
as they seek to hide their shame and advancement.
A maturity of mind confronts them
as they search for a meaning
that won't degrade their love and esteem.
A letter a call
both indefinite
yet essential to their existence
as they attempt to explain their position.
Hatred and fear
permit them a haven within their own hearts
as they devise a plan
to comprehend their naturally unnatural position.
They change their style to fit
their own needs and desires
no longer afraid
willing to accept the responsibility
unable to escape the truth
no longer afraid to explain
wishing
wanting only the right to exist
alone free
in the thoughts of their mind
no longer afraid
concerned
with the evil thoughts of older generation blues
as they accept
without reservation
the finality of their situation
conscious of their existence
permanence
as individuals worthy of
your love respect admiration
Individuals.

Emily Nixon

TRAFFIC

Again
the glaring
sun
greeted me
with
its hazy
smile
and prodded
me
in my
tin
machine to
join
the other
groggy
heads in
their machines,
as
we sacrificed
scenery,
with tall
green
pines, for
Time,
to run
a
race that's
never
won, yet
never
ends.

Charles Feldstein

THE WIND'S SONG

The elderly lady had nothing to do;
rocking, she cleaned her glasses once more,
but it was useless.
Her eyes were now like fogged-up window-panes
on a snowy day.
Her glasses were beyond repair and
held bandages of an aging battle.
The wind laughed at her thoughts and
whistled notes into her ears,
"You are old and useless. Why think of
the past when there is only the future?"
The future? What did it contain? Death,
most surely, but was there not something
else to look forward to?
She laughed with the wind and laughed at
her memories; her laugh was heavy and
coarse.
As she laughed, her foggy eyes wept
and over-ran with icy tears.
She scorned the wind and told it bitterly,
"Life is hell, but so is death, and I
would rather have a hellish life than
a hellish death!!"
She rocked on steadily with this
thought in mind and reminded herself
of days past.
"Besides," she choked, "the heat will do
my cold bones good."
She laughed at her own joke.
And laughing once more,
her hands fell limp.
The fog in her eyes cleared and sunshine
poured through on her thoughts of youth.
And once more, she was beautiful
and full of life.
She was young
and at peace with herself.
The wind reached the climax of its whistled song
and her rocking chair stopped on this note
of the tune.

Colleen Turnage

Sometimes you make me
cry
like a
leaky faucet
who sheds
wasted
tear
all for nothing
but feels it's the
only way to
let you know
you forgot to turn
the water off. . .

Linda Jennings

MIRROR, MIRROR

There's a window in my mirror—
a reflection of the light
beckoning and calling me
to come out into the night.
I wish to slip through my mirror
bathed by that ghostly light
entering into the shadow world
where nothing is black or white.
You'd find me as the sun rose
with the cold dew on my feet;
I'd slip back through my mirror
the morning light to meet.

Ellen Jordan

yes i shall strive
for the garbage disposal
swimming pool
Cadillac lined garage
semi affluent rhyme
i take thee
house, lot, mortgage,
chandelier (batteries not included)
"small getaway by the sea"
inboard outboard
leaves the pier
launching new American aristocracy
the slightly affluent me
only the best neighbors
living just outside the city
i promise myself tennis lessons
and a golf pro
poor relations will know
i'm finally sitting pretty

riding in the sun
with you through this suburban wonderland
'tis springtime
and i hear the country club call
my tax free friend,
you've shown me
the error of my upbringing
poverty only makes one greedy
and that's a sin
(not to mention tacky)
so i pledge myself eternally
to the American way of wife
God, Country and
Lawn

Ann Phillips

Life
is a
Game—
a
"Monopoly"
leading
to some
Park Place
or
Boardwalk
or
nowhere . . .
. . . like
going
directly to
Jail
and
never getting
out—
I'll not pass
"Go"
again—
So many
questions
with
not
enough
answers . . .
. . .or
at least
not the
right
ones—

I have
no
answers
anymore
and
I'm
tired
of
playing
the
"Game". . .

Linda Jennings

CHAINED FREEDOM

The wind was impatient with the leaves that night as Boedicea walked home from the village. Moonlight filtered through the half-bare trees of fall. Her straw bonnet flew from her head, riding with the wind and she watched its tumbling among the leaves for a moment, drawing in her breath. This is freedom, she thought, this sudden chill brought into the night air by fall gusts, tossing her bonnet into a congregation of leaves. She snatched her bonnet from its resting place, scooped the hem of her dress up into her right hand, and began darting in and out among nature's cathedral.

The wind's chilling breath pushed from behind her and laced its intangible fingers around her feet, causing her to fall. She got up, whimpering like some stray dog that had been kicked away from the butcher shop window, and glanced warily around her, wondering how many pairs of eyes were laughing at her.

Boedicea began her journey home again as she had many nights before. It seemed that she would get home again without further mishap but fate was in a disagreeable mood that fall night. A strange thought passed through her head about fate being like a cat stalking its prey such as a bird or a mouse. A mouse, in her mind was a meek little creature, easily caught, but a bird could fly out of the cat's reach. Ah! to be like the bird, she sighed.

"I will be the bird!" she vowed, facing the heavens defiantly.

"Then beware of the gilded cage," a deep leering voice replied. Startled, she turned and surprise crept across her features. The voice had decieved her. She had expected a man but saw before her a boy she knew from the village as Alexander. As he stepped out of the shadows, she realized how much he had changed in a year. The war with the colonists had aged him more than she had realized at first glance.

"What business is it of yours. . . Alex!" Her husky voice brought great attention to his name. She would strike back at this intruder of her thoughts, if only with words. His grey eyes hardened. She had won a small victory but that did not mean she would win the war. She silently prayed.

Alexander came forward and touched her cheek.

"You are bleeding." It was a statement. He refused to rise to her bait.

Boedicea tried to slap his disgustingly handsome face. He ducked and her rage increased. She quickly voiced her opinion of his behavior. She hadn't got past the third word when she looked up into his eyes. His black brows met across his forehead in a dangerous scowl. Boedicea had not noticed his extreme height until now. Her throat went dry.

Her nails went for his eyes, but caught the side of his face. With great satisfaction, she felt his skin collect beneath her fingernails. Alex pushed her away, grunting in pain. She gurgled with laughter.

"You are as bloody as your namesake, by Jove. You like the prospect of battle with me, don't you?" His voice was low and dangerously quiet.

"If I were a lady I would reply, 'No!' to your question. But as I'm not a lady . . ."

"Far from it," he interjected.

"I'm not a lady. . . yet." Boedicea let the last word hang in the crisp night air.

"What do you mean by 'yet'?"

"None of *your* business, I'm sure," she clipped the words short. She had no sooner finished her sentence when Alexander deftly tilted her head so that she looked up into his eyes, bent his head, and smothered her lips with his. He removed his hand from her chin and she realized they had been clinging to each other fiercely.

"You were saying?" Again, it was a statement. Boedicea saw that his lips were smiling but the smile did not reach his hooded grey eyes.

"*Devil!*" She started beating on his chest but he soon held both of her wrists tightly, openly grinning at her efforts to gain freedom.

"I'll leave you now, Boedicea," he said as he released her wrists.

She would not show him how flustered he had made her. She would be as ridiculously calm as he appeared to be. She tossed her head back and whispered through her teeth, "Good night Alexander. I wish you well. Perhaps we'll meet again someday. . . Until then, take care of your face." She could not help that bit of barbed wire coming onto her tongue.

"Perhaps . . ." He touched his raw cheek negligently. Turning, he began to make his way through the many piles of leaves. Alexander looked back to where she stood and said,

"You've lost, you know . . . the queen . . .it suits you." He bowed and vanished into the interlocking branches of the forest.

The wind was growing tired of its play and Boedicea ran blindly through the maze of branches till she reached the cottage she called home. Up in her room, she yawned and began to unbutton her mauve dress. Boedicea let it fall to the floor. She sighed. Getting out of her dress felt very like having had shackles removed after being imprisoned for a long period of time.

She soon realized that she was staring at her pale, sombre figure in the old wall mirror across from her bed. The image there began to slip away before her sleep-filled eyes. She shivered and pulled her nightgown over her head.

For a moment, the moon caught a glimpse of her long, sleek body making a pantherish leap for her bed. In the next instant, she felt the feather mattress beneath her touch and vanished in its downy depths, as Alexander had disappeared into the forest's mist.

Colleen Turnage

PHASE OF A STAR

The diamond module is a mirrored satellite, slowly rotating,
flashing and reflecting lights, picking up colors that blind and
stagger the eye.

Slowly the diamond, like petals of a flower waking to the morning
dew opens to reveal an ebony hand, gigantic in size sprinkled
with stardust.

The hand slowly flexed downward revealing the Main Man sitting
in the palm.

Lisa Flanders

and when i was nineteen
the palmist said
there was a cross to bear
her beads shook
i nodded
then i knew what
it
was about
but today
i carry my crosses
in a back pocket

and you
wear the fish
but you bear a cross
same as me
yeah, that kind of thing shows
too
and i know your type
you'll suffer through

at nineteen you keep your hands
in empty pockets
don't touch,
look
lust
just don't

memo from above:
we are the chosen few
today's hip religion's latest jew
listen, i say
it's like being left-handed
it's right
for you

and you are afraid of me
perhaps, you should be
'cause the palmist said
there was a loss to share
the earth shook
i plodded along
i mean,
then i (really) knew what
everything
was about

how 'bout you

Ann Phillips

Emerald needles
  threaded with thin strands
  of crystallized koolaid
The water dissolves into sweet
  biting glass cubes
To glaze the top
  and quench the throat.

Joan Oviatt

"DOLLY"

you paint your crazy elephants
with mile-high toothpick legs
people wonder why time melts over tables
and Narcissus is born
alongside an egg in a hand
Christ looks down upon St. John
from a modern acrylic plastic cross
suspended in space
Voltaire appears in a slave market
and disappears as quickly
your colors seem so real
and yet, not quite real
you saw Africa as no one ever has
probably as no one ever will
and only you could paint the Crucifixion
from the bleeding victim's point of view
surrealism
you're the master

M'Lou Greene

STUMPS

"Everybody lost something. A house, your things, a person or an animal.
There wasn't nobody that didn't."

Floodrain starts
like a war
or a show,
clambers outside like the mob.
This old woman cracks
on the edge of the mouth.
It might speak!

Scrambling out with our ludicrous
  bundles, our crumbs
the bulb of the moon stares
through the loud wind's heat.

David Childers

paper fold-out turkey
pink tail
    orange
        yellow
            brown body
dime-store imitation
    of autumn colors

it's not yet Thanksgiving
but the plastic
            day-glo
                Christmas decorations
already adorn
    the shopping center parking lots

a few flakes fall
at 9:30 this morning
    and turn to mud
tomorrow it will be
    clear and warming
i'm tired of false winters

M'Lou Greene

STORM

Raindrops falling on the window-pane
  drippingly silent and wet
Huge clouds of spongy grey
  arguing
            smoldering
  into foaming black
Charcoal adversaries blending
  becoming one blackness

Hammers pounding
Anvils screaming
Thunder ripping
            the swollen sky
Burning
Searing
Cold pain
As trees bending
            swaying
  in fear of the thunder
Lose the greeness of their leaves
  in the storm's dying glory.

Colleen Turnage

today I tried to take
your life
and what a service
i did
silly you,
silly me
thinking you could dedicate
(decapitate)
any part of you to a
group of we's
you draw your strength not from
numbers
two, three, four
we know the score
five, six, seven
ain't this heaven
but from that number
One

you must take a vow
never to offer anymore
than a sneeze to the we's
since you find your life has
grown allergic to groups and we's,
busy bees, afternoon teas,
high ideals,
"how great it feels,"
banana peels, any symbol
or cymbal,
agreeing, disagreeing,
dumb fears,
fat rears,
and bless you!
blow your nose at those gals
snapping, snarling, sneaking
sneering, snickering,
snoring (rhymes with boring) and
snorting

you should also vow
to be loyal (while sneezing)
to those daring ones
who skyrocket into
your life
slambang!
sending love showers
across your golden skyline
firecracker friends who
beg you, weary earth walker,
to fly,
soar,
swear allegiance to the
indestructible self

today you really saved my life
you are rising
and we are at daybreak
i salute you,
brave new dawn.

Ann Phillips

MOSSY TURRENTS

Joints make a bluish smoke
Silver haberdashes
Ladies of white
Whores on the street at five p.m.
Golden blasts of trumpet calls
The bell tolls to naked ears
Strangely silent in the park today
Clanging clash of swords
The blood rolls on dirt.

Cities reach to the sky
And castles host the holy grail
Saturday night specials
The streets are dark
Rusted armor reflects no light
Tires bark, and somewhere
Night fire goes on
Minstrel's fires burn into the night
Cold steel to find a warm berth
But central air drowns out the noise.

And the owl watches over all.
And the owl watches over all.

Michael Ingram

SILENCE AND SAND

How green an oasis you were
In a planet of dunes and scorched earth!
Yes I drank and drank of your nectar,
But I could never drink my fill.
You were the *only* source of life,
And your voice reverberated across the land,
To fill that awful silence with
Beautiful, audacious sound.

How sad it is to see it now;
Your verdure has turned to sand.
And you are but a drifting dune
Shifting with the scorching wind.
I really want to tell you, too
That your nectar has dried to dust.
Wasn't it very foolish of me
To mourn your remnants so long?

Ellen Jordan

THE COPY

I see myself in your eyes
Swimming in those deep dark pools.

Trying to emerge from this cool gray substance of
your personality.

We are one, reflections of the same person yet,
some part of me wants to be free. Free from this oneness.

Once, I escaped running wild, letting the wind carry me
where it would.

Then as if waking from a forgotten dream, I felt myself
slipping, slipping, merging back into that oneness.

Lisa Flanders

i cry
in remembering
the times i
spent without you;
so long they
were without you,'til
all i dreamed
was of you
either near
or far away;
and i
beheld your shadow
upon the wall
of my heart,
so near the throne of
my heart;
i couldn't stand it
anymore—
so i made you mine
forever,
so i could have you forever,
until
my time would come
to be no more.

Alvin Johnson

SPANISH CORNER

1

We never really hit it
off together
But it was a beautiful
painting
we did.
The colors
blended just so.
Our brush strokes
mingled together
to create
the ultimate mural.
It was one-in-a-million.
But on opening night
a child clothed by darkness
clutching a polished brass knife,
sliced our painting.
It lay crushed
for a century
or two
with layers
of age-old dust
hiding
our image from view.

2

And now,
the sun shines
on our slashed creation.
It wasn't too badly
damaged.
You felt it too
the small pinprick
of shadowed disappointment
We should get together
again
to paint another one.
If we hang it
just a big
higher
this time—
perhaps
it may be out of reach.

Joan Oviatt

PINEAPPLE SYMBOL

The pineapple is majestic
a centerpiece itself
on a cut glass pedestal.

Crowned by stiff plumage
the cone-shaped fruit ripens
from green to brown to gold.

Slanted markings on its skin
remind me of a ham scored
in blocks dotted with cloves.

Ironic that the sign
of hospitality should be
covered with pricks!

Is it hospitable because
it grown in warm climes
and offers itself as wine?

A nostalgic frangrance fills
the room, and I long for
Russian tea and hospitality.

Rebecca Schenck

The thunder is so dark
light springs from it.
In a room cool as a fish

This woman and I
make ourself a cave.

It is the mountain
you hear laughing.
It is the factory
breaking out the noise of wind.
It is the God of persistence and hope

Marching the red
waves of sky into
our lives across our eyes.

Toward light like roots
we rise to no said end.

David Childers

SHADOWS

Slinking through the shadows,
I try to avoid the sun.
My eyes are accustomed to the gloom.
My feet can easily find the path,
for they've traveled it many times.
Yes, I much prefer the shadows
to the harsh glow of reality's "sun."
For there one is subjected to expectations—
there's many a role to fill.
A series of cages one inhabits,
till a cry for freedom bursts
involuntarily from the mind.
The sun can rarely penetrate the dense foliage,
and I sit safely under a giant tree
on a carpet of thick and springy moss.
It was provided for my comfort—
to cushion me as I sit
and watch the vines that twine
through the trees, up and out of sight.
What some would call the perimeter,
and merely the fringe of existence
Is actually the vital core
of what we know as life.

Ellen Jordan

lean back and enjoy the sun
the rocking of the waves
everything's bright white and blue
sky and sea
birds and fish
several miles from anyone
only a sail for shade
a gentle breeze keeps us moving
and the scenery changes only slightly
if we could sail on forever
we'd hit Mexico
turn around, and sail back again

M'Lou Greene

i am a little sea creature
origin, unknown, but unafraid
and i am floating, enjoying
the green warmth of the sea
living and being, wanting no more
and i, for the first time, can see how
gently the waves break over me

Ann Phillips

A single
light
in a
room
filled
with
darkened
loneliness
and
endless
emptyness
seemingly
creates
faded
pictures
of your
face
in the
subtle
shadows
of
my
mind ...

Linda Jennings

IMAGES I

Once you were a mannequin,
The product of a man-made creation.

With painted face and glitter you dazzled and shocked the mass media (who now bow down before you).

You were a spaceage messiah, descending to earth, claiming your birthright as the mortal one.

But now your cosmic stairway has turned into a mountainous landslide of self-destruction.

Now you've become a duke thin and white, a beaming shaft of light, bursting upon the world like a heatwave.

You know you should be the Sun King.

Lisa Flanders

Well. . .

Sinking down
slowly
into
the depths of
despair.
Wishing to stay there.
Slowly, painfully
as you try
to rise
With tear-filled eyes.
Suddenly, as a thread
of light
Shines above
and you are borne up
Through the big hole
as someone says,
"Sure was dumb to fall in."
feeling better
but still
raw
In places
As you see crowds of faces
Around the well
you fell into.

Joan Oviatt

What is this spring which proffers gifts
Of unabashed simplicity;
The tenderness of newborn leaves
Stretched forth in purest innocence?

The smell of pine trees, warm and staid
Brings forth a million memories gone
Of days spread long below the sun—
Eternity at play.

I cannot speak the things I know
Of wide expanse and mountain-blue—
An atmosphere so rarified
It borders on divinity.

Elisabeth Scott

DEAR GIRLS

I'm glad
you liked
Big Mama,
because
I am
part of her
and you are
part of me.

Rebecca Schenck

ANOTHER RESCUE

the air's been biting my arms all morning.
the gravel shifts under my tennis shoes
as i lean my weight.
i wanted to avoid you.
but in this imaginary world of the mind
you are walking with me.
arm-in-arm.
the real world is no longer fun.
i try to stay awake,
firmly believing you are three-thousand
miles away.
usually it works.
though i knew it wouldn't be long
before your return.
someone's beside me now.
idle chatter
rustles the leaves on the surrounding trees.
at last i am safe.

Joan Oviatt

A fragile ship set sail today;
It pierced the ice that rims the bay.
I stood there earthbound on the shore,
Cursing the fearful heart within my breast,
Knowing my longing to follow will never grant me rest.
What is it causes me to tremble in such fear?
You know on board the ship are all I hold dear.

They're going where the tropic winds blow;
May they find joy to end their woe.
Perhaps those dear ones will not live to return,
For they may founder amid the shifting ice
Before their search is ended for an earthly paradise.
All these things I ponder on this barren shore;
Then silently I turn to enter my cast-iron door.

Ellen Jordan

Without a breath
i flew away
unable to take the story
or the child
i wanted you
but without a breath
i left you.

Emily Nixon

INTRUSION

Once again you have come into my
valley

Tasted the sweetness of my honey and
felt the warmth of my mellow streams.

Surging through quiet streams, disrupting
its tranquil bliss.

Your volcanic rays seething to the point of eruption.

Once again you have explored unknown paths
in my valley

Tasted the nectar of innocence, basking
in its stripped chastity.

Leaving always with thoughts of intruding
once more.

Lisa Flanders

ECSTASY

Bare shoulders
Arms embraced
Skin against skin
Lips, teeth, tongue
Loins and legs
And
then
a
Fart.

Charles Feldstein

ODE

Like an all consuming flame seeping through my body
Searing its way to the very core.
That is how I think of you.
Like the branches of a tree, reaching out to grasp my mind
That is how I think of you.
Like the setting of the evening sun, intensified by its
vivid haze.
That is how I think of you.

Lisa Flanders

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